

Team GBR

2024

F3K World Championships

Włocławek, Poland



Team Manager's Report - Paul Robinson

Photos Courtesy of: Izabela Krawczyk

Introduction

Enquiries towards the end of 2023 indicated that the team in Poland were considering putting together a European Championships in 2024 and were gauging interest from various countries including the UK. The championship was not officially confirmed until April which did lead to some logistical challenges.

The Team

The top three pilots from the league were contacted and after some initial uncertainty about who would be able to attend, they were all able to confirm their availability..

Gavin Stern: Has flown in multiple F3K international comps including the European and World Champs.

Michael Stern: Has flown in numerous international F3K comps including the worlds, and is our greatest F3K ambassador.

Cornelius van Onselen: This will be Corne's second international event, having flown his first at the WCH in 2023.

Team Manager: Paul Robinson

No additional helpers were required as every pilot was happy to have another team member acting as their helper/spotter.

Entry forms were completed and flights finally booked in April, having finally

BMFA F3K League Table 2023

POS	Pilot	Date	RadioGlide					Nationals			Superfly Cup			Romania 100				Total	BEST OF 4 of 7	Percentage	Points Δ	%Points Δ	
			Twywell L1	Buckminster L2	Malvern L3	Buckminster L4	Buckminster L5	Malvern L6	Buckminster L7	Malvern L8	Sanpetru World Cup L9	Buckminster L10	Twywell L11	Malvern L12	Twywell R2	Buckminster R1	Malvern R16						
1	Michael Stern	25/03/2023		100.00	97.50			100.00					99.13		95.60			95.90	591.13	397.73	100.00	0.00	0.00
2	Cornelius van Onselen	08/04/2023		94.10	99.10	95.30							92.42		95.30			100.00	673.42	391.60	98.46	-6.13	-1.54
3	Gavin Stern	13/05/2023		97.10	88.60								96.83		96.00			87.50	564.53	388.43	97.66	-8.30	-2.34
4	Mike Challiner	27-28/05/23			95.30	100.00									94.90			480.00	385.70	96.98	-12.03	-3.02	
5	Paul Robinson	17-18/6/23		82.10	98.10	88.10									100.00			83.00	631.20	384.30	96.62	-13.43	-3.38
6	Hohen Jude	01/07/2023		67.00	92.90										86.80			96.40	528.90	376.10	94.56	-21.63	-5.44
7	Paul Carrington	22-23/7/23		66.80	100.00										82.60			88.30	430.20	363.40	91.37	-34.33	-8.63
8	Carlos Dos Santos	12/08/2023		89.30	98.70										82.60			356.69	356.69	88.68	-41.04	-10.32	
9	David Poole					43.80		95.40							92.70	94.50		326.40	326.40	82.07	-71.33	-17.93	
10	Mike van Erp			89.20	85.50	91.00									56.20			321.90	321.90	80.93	-75.83	-19.07	
11	Neil Harrison				93.80	97.70	88.20								29.40			309.10	309.10	77.72	-88.63	-22.28	
12	Phil Hoyle					71.00	60.50								81.10	76.90		289.50	289.50	72.79	-108.23	-27.21	
13	Neil Pritchett				50.21	81.60									57.80	67.40		257.01	257.01	64.62	-140.72	-35.38	
14	Brenton Wait			68.20			57.90								46.70			76.10	248.90	248.90	62.58	-148.83	-37.42
15	Will Acworth				88.20	80.00										72.90		241.10	241.10	60.62	-156.63	-39.38	
16	Steve Crozier			70.00	71.70	39.70												181.40	181.40	45.61	-216.33	-54.39	
17	Tom Spence			56.50	60.80	60.60	56.60											234.50	178.00	44.75	-219.73	-55.25	
18	Finn Hayes																	171.20	171.20	43.04	-226.53	-56.96	
19	Mark Frain					84.00												86.00	86.00	21.62	-311.73	-78.38	
20	Paskal Ferenc														67.00			67.00	67.00	16.85	-330.73	-83.15	
21	Kevin Dixon																	63.40	63.40	63.40	15.94	-334.33	-84.06
22	John Pierson																	58.10	58.10	14.61	-339.63	-85.39	
23	Martin Appleby			42.10														42.10	42.10	10.59	-355.63	-89.41	
24	Sam Wade						30.90											30.90	30.90	7.77	-366.83	-92.23	
25	John Summerville						29.10											29.10	29.10	7.32	-368.63	-92.68	



received official confirmation that the event would go ahead.

Flying Site

The field was at an airport to the south of the main town. The main runway is several hundred metres to the south of the marked box. Much closer was the helipad where a firefighting helicopter sat at the ready. It would be called upon several times during the two events which of course meant some delays as it took off and landed.

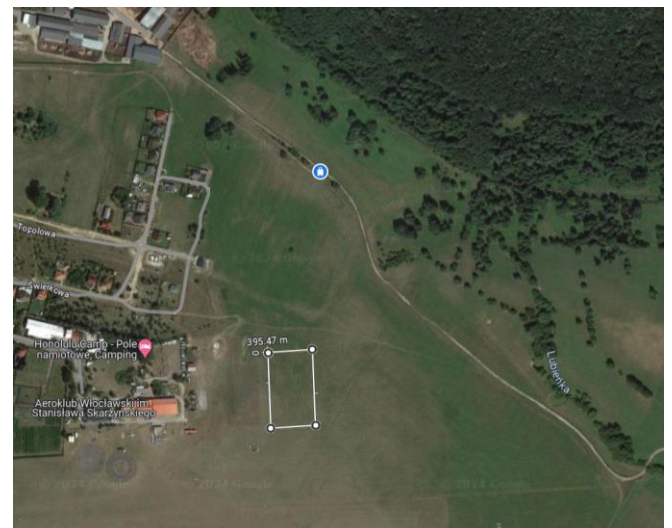
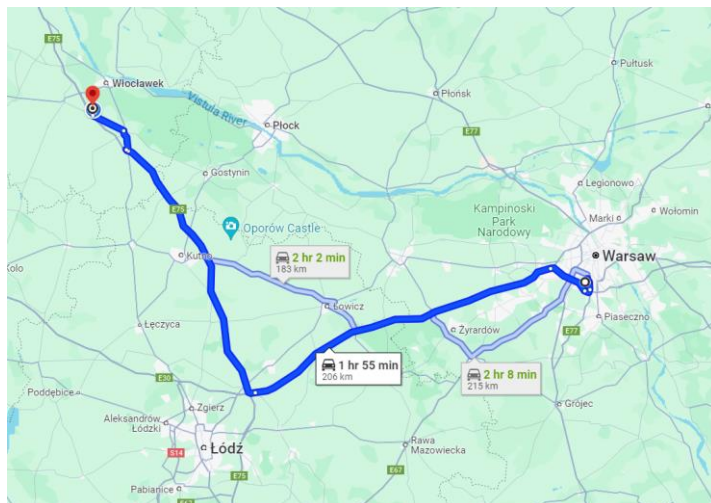
There is a small cafe/bar at the field where drinks and a limited selection of food could be purchased. We took advantage of this on several evenings as a quick way to grab some food after a long day.

We had arranged to borrow a tent/shelter before we arrived but quickly found that there was no provision of any kind for chairs or additional shelter so we made the decision to visit some local shops to locate some cheap chairs. We found some plastic

garden chairs that seemed to fit the bill. We ended up donating them to the on site cafe when we left. This was certainly cheaper than if we had attempted to hire any more substantial chairs for the 10 day period.

Travel

Flights direct from Heathrow to Warsaw were booked for quite a reasonable cost and the dedicated flight cases that each pilot had made transport of models easy.



This only required a notification to the airline beforehand that each pilot would be taking one piece of oversized luggage as their "checked bag" with no additional charges. The move to two piece wings for the majority of F3K models has made this process much simpler.

We opted to hire two smaller estate cars (Ford Focus Estate) to give more flexibility for the same price as a larger car, big enough for 4 passengers and luggage/model boxes would have been. The additional flexibility of being able to travel back and forwards from the flying field to the hotel at different times was useful on a number of occasions.

Organisation

Although for the most part the championships were well organised, there were a few teething problems prior to the start of the competition and some more issues around reflight arrangements once the event began. As I understand it, the CD was not particularly familiar with F3K and



this led to some misunderstandings. I had noted in the TM guidance notes the suggestion that as a native English speaker it may be useful to act almost as an intermediary in some cases and I found that this was welcomed by the CD and I think by other TMs too when attempting to explain some of the finer points of rules or procedures.

Accommodation and Meals

We opted to stay at the Hotel Victoria in Włocławek itself which was around 20 mins drive from the field. The hotel was notable for its 20s style decor but was clean and pleasant to be in although the advertised "air conditioning" was either not 100% functional or set to a temperature that was higher than any of us were hoping for. Any attempt to lower the thermostat was undone by the staff servicing the room while we were out during the day! I wouldn't go as far as advising future visitors to not stay there, but I would not fully recommend it either.

Our journey to the field each day took us close to a Lidl supermarket and rather than paying the 12 euros per day for the lunches provided by the organisers we opted to spend a fraction of that on a selection of bread, cheese, meat and drinks each morning from Lidl.



Włocławek World Cup (Pre-Comp)

July 3rd

Day 1 of the trip started with an early journey to Heathrow. All four members of the group met with no problems and the flight was on time and uneventful.

Once we arrived in Warsaw there was a short wait for the model boxes at the oversized luggage collection point followed by locating the hire car desks and grabbing some food before the 2 hour drive to our hotel.

Once checked in we made our way to the field to check out the location and route. A few teams were there setting up but the official practice was not scheduled until the next day.



July 4th

Illness

Unfortunately, on the day after arrival I began to feel ill. It started with cold-like symptoms and moved on over a couple of days to a full on flu like illness which in hindsight may have been COVID. This impacted the team in the World Cup (WC) pre-competition but although I was feeling far from 100% by the start of the European Championship (ECH), I was able to carry out the Team Manager role and act as Gavin's helper for most of his flights.

My main concern was that I would infect one of the team pilots, but my efforts to avoid that paid off as the rest of the team remained healthy for the duration of the trip.

Our second day in Poland was a designated practice day from 11am. Registration of the team was carried out and the borrowed tent was erected between the Austrian and Ukrainian teams.

Later in the day we also made the trip to the local equivalents of Decathlon and B&Q to purchase a cooler box and chairs.

The tarp that Corne had managed to fit into his flight box also came out to provide some much needed shade.



July 5th

The WC opening ceremony was a brief welcome on the field by the CD. Briefing of pilots was carried out and the event kicked off at 9am.

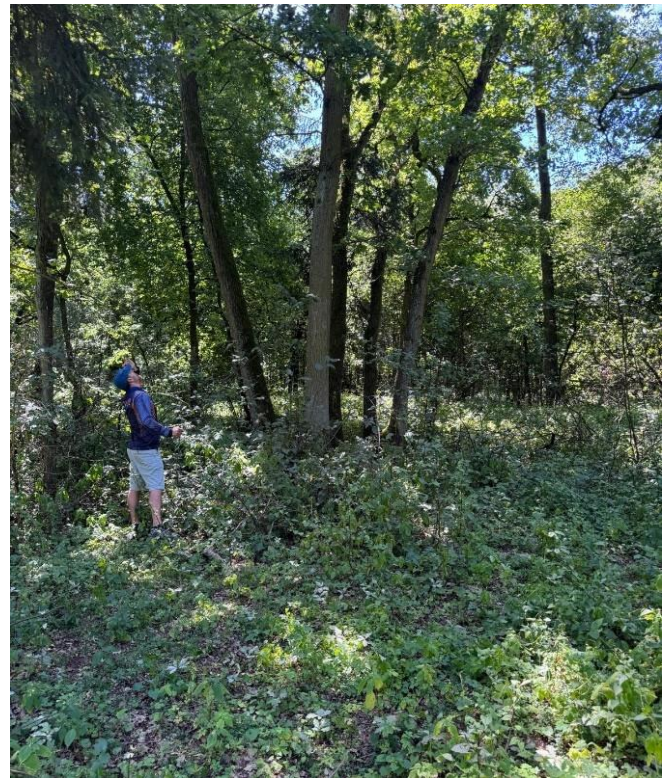
Conditions: Windy, gusty, hot

First day kicked off with wind worthy of 40-50g of ballast. Wind dropped for some rounds but in general, conditions were tough. By R6, Mike described it as a "howling gale", flying at max weight (335g) and this was after 7pm!

I was feeling very unwell by this point and after struggling to fly two rounds retired to the car and then to the hotel to sleep.



at what turned out to be almost 500m from the flying box and I mentally marked the features of the treeline. Having relayed that position information to the three pilots after the round had concluded I flew my round while they went to search for the model.

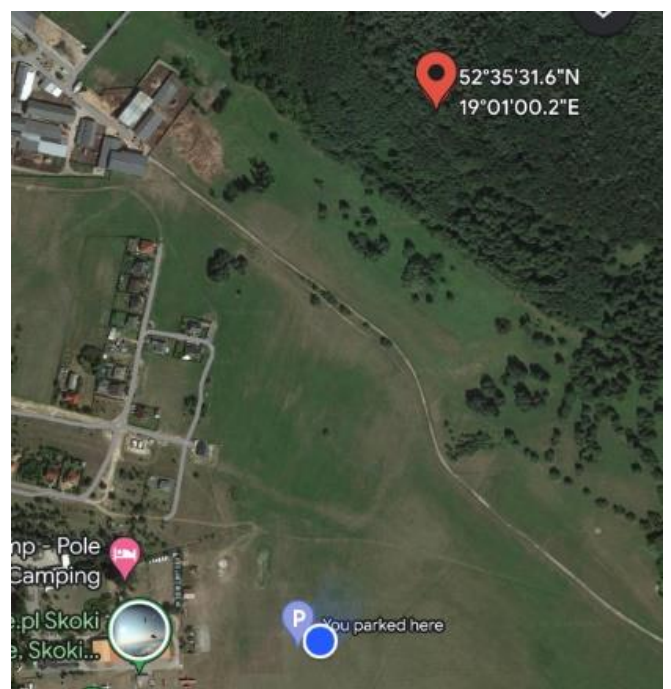


July 6th

The second day started hot and breezy. The day started with much less wind and a change of direction too. Started with Round 7.

Forest Excursion

Round 8 was All Up. All three pilots were flying in the same group and I was on the sidelines timing for Gavin (no helper allowed on the field for this task). After successfully getting away, high above the tree line, Gavin lost sight of his model and tried in vain to regain contact. Meanwhile I had a clear view of it as it descended towards the trees. I saw it enter the forest



Having found it using the RSSI reading from his radio it seemed out of reach of even the tallest pole. This was confirmed having borrowed a 10m pole which would not reach and then enlisting the help of the organisers to locate a ladder and a willing volunteer to climb it, with the pole and finally release the model from the tree's grasp. Amazingly, damage was minimal. A few rounds were missed during the retrieval that not only involved the pole but also transporting the ladder over two fences, across a stream while balancing on a fallen tree and through the nettles that lined the forest floor.

By Round 9 the wind had returned and it grew for the rest of the day. Conditions were brutal. There was still lift, but the wind made it difficult.

We were all glad the day was done by the end of Round 12. It was so tiring flying in that much wind all day. Considering the trials of the day, we were happy with the results.

Mike had flown very well to finish in 11th place with Corenlus in 45th, Gavin in 54th and myself, almost dead last in 75th.

After gathering for the results ceremony and carrying out the registration for the ECH we retired to the hotel after a long and eventful couple of days.

Rank	Name	Ctry	FAI_ID	Pilot #	Class	Score	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5	Rnd6	Rnd7	Rnd8	Rnd9	Rnd10	Rnd11	Rnd12	Penalty
							L2 3max in 7m	Best5 2:00max	AllUp 3:00*3	1, 2, 3, 4	Poker 3 in 10m	Best3 3:20max	L1 5max in 7m	AllUp 3:00*3	Poker 3 in 10m	L3 3:00max	2 flights 5max	Big Ladder	
1	MERLIJN, Vincent	NED	81977	57	Sen	10799,5	1000,0	991,7	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	*664,4	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	907,8	1000,0	1000,0	100
2	SANDER, Henri	GER	70932	5	Sen	10703,9	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	943,1	1000,0	941,8	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	980,5	*247,9	838,5	
3	DUSS, Cederic	SUI	29119	4	Sen	10697,4	1000,0	925,3	963,1	1000,0	983,3	866,7	1000,0	*666,7	1000,0	959,0	1000,0	1000,0	
4	ROTTELEUR, Anthony	FRA	60348	14	Sen	10318,9	1000,0	999,5	973,3	1000,0	*0,0	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	991,3	408,1	946,7	
5	FLIXEDER, Bernhard	AUT	46785	13	Sen	10229,7	1000,0	984,0	886,1	995,6	936,8	1000,0	1000,0	666,7	990,0	897,7	872,8	*477,9	
6	HUCALJUK, Arijan	CRO	61359	59	Sen	10197,2	1000,0	1000,0	666,7	825,7	1000,0	923,7	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	*363,1	781,1	1000,0	
7	BRANDES, Sebastian	GER	70934	2	Sen	10190,2	1000,0	989,1	1000,0	996,0	*219,3	741,2	1000,0	1000,0	738,1	913,8	812,0	1000,0	
8	COLLIN, Steeve	FRA	100055	24	Sen	10137,9	1000,0	991,3	832,8	961,1	938,2	845,1	1000,0	1000,0	*0,0	803,8	829,3	936,3	
9	KOENIG, Paul	GER	131122	6	Sen	9862,8	1000,0	943,6	800,9	981,4	1000,0	966,9	1000,0	1000,0	*0,0	1000,0	364,3	805,7	
10	SJOBERG, Hakan	SWE	31034	38	Sen	9824,3	920,8	938,5	938,5	919,4	883,8	834,1	1000,0	1000,0	776,8	881,1	*0,0	731,3	
11	STERN, Michael	GBR	66376	18	Sen	9818,1	670,6	884,0	886,9	975,8	874,8	717,0	1000,0	1000,0	*509,4	820,6	1000,0	988,4	
12	SIUMBRYNS, Ricardas	LTU	27233	63	Sen	9818,1	1000,0	998,0	1000,0	993,1	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	336,9	1000,0	666,7	*0,0	823,4	
13	JAROSZAK, Mariusz	POL	79308	15	Sen	9719,0	999,3	948,6	967,4	976,5	*200,3	977,0	1000,0	1000,0	665,2	442,8	925,6	816,6	
14	STASIULEWICZ, Piotr	POL	138436	37	Sen	9711,3	1000,0	988,3	808,7	987,0	*400,7	797,4	1000,0	959,4	450,8	976,3	960,4	797,0	
15	HEINLE, Philipp	GER	158489	3	Sen	9647,7	1000,0	1000,0	812,4	987,7	648,7	946,1	1000,0	1000,0	339,6	971,0	*0,0	942,2	
16	JANAS, Cezary	POL	66925	11	Sen	9646,5	779,4	884,2	824,1	720,7	*607,4	1000,0	1000,0	872,5	978,6	881,8	965,8	739,4	
17	ISTRATE, Alin Ionut	ROU	82704	75	Sen	9616,1	842,8	983,2	666,7	948,0	*550,9	876,4	1000,0	934,6	810,7	907,6	706,7	939,4	
18	SONNE, Tobias Sig	DEN	70468	77	Sen	9470,3	1000,0	965,2	916,7	637,3	584,3	859,2	1000,0	1000,0	*400,7	829,4	772,3	905,9	
19	SIUMBRYNS, Adas	LTU	65258	62	Sen	9441,9	*670,6	1000,0	676,0	999,8	1000,0	676,8	1000,0	946,3	1000,0	710,1	712,9	720,0	
20	FLUCK, Stefan	SUI	81321	7	Sen	9400,4	1000,0	1000,0	1000,0	995,6	*0,0	975,7	1000,0	857,6	350,6	814,1	706,7	700,1	
21	CESKEVICIUS, Laurynas	LTU	65259	64	Sen	9352,2	952,8	923,8	790,6	623,7	*0,0	924,4	1000,0	666,7	1000,0	517,8	1000,0	952,4	
22	GABINOWSKI, Rafal	POL	167742	39	Sen	9329,8	588,3	973,6	874,4	987,4	879,7	888,9	1000,0	854,3	*187,9	518,3	865,7	899,2	
23	HRIBAL, Karel	CZE	132422	10	Sen	9326,3	980,6	868,6	*561,6	955,3	669,8	703,1	1000,0	1000,0	563,6	1000,0	885,0	700,3	
45	VAN ONSELEN, Corneliu	GBR	168380	20	Sen	8309,6	500,0	832,4	638,3	947,9	*300,5	804,7	1000,0	1000,0	625,0	659,5	410,0	891,8	
54	STERN, Gavin	GBR	83028	19	Sen	7666,3	400,8	913,5	571,3	884,9	857,6	838,4	1000,0	333,3	464,9	*0,0	857,2	544,4	
75	ROBINSON, Paul	GBR	133695	17	Sen	4414,2	661,9	903,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	1000,0	777,6	338,2	0,0	733,5	*0,0	

The European Championship

July 7th

With various model repair/preparation tasks to do, we spent the morning in the hotel labelling, form filling and building/repairing.

We were allocated a particular practice slot time to avoid too many competitors on the field at once and after that practice slot we visited the model registration area for the official process. This was not so much of a formality for some as we observed several pilots furiously sanding wing tips to reduce their span to the legal 1.5m. Corne also fell foul of the CX5 nose radius issue that had been observed at the previous championships. This was quickly resolved though, always helpful when the model's manufacturer happens to be on site flying for another team!

At 3pm we gathered for the opening ceremony where a few local dignitaries sat and watched as the officials welcomed us all to the event. There was a display from a local aerobatic RC pilot with some impressive flying on display and once that ceremony ended I waited for the Team Managers meeting at 5pm.

Nothing too contentious was discussed although there was definitely a lot of questions and clarification.

July 8th

Round 1 kicked off with Last 2, 3min max.

Conditions were very calm compared to the pre-comp, partly overcast, light wind, light lift. Mike and Gav in groups 3 and 5 both made both flights. Corne in group 4 seemed to have harder air and made one

flight just under 3m and a second just over 2m for a score of 832.

Round 2 (1,2,3,4) No clear read to start for Corne in Group 1. A mixed set of flights and lift conditions, 3 pilots shared the 1000 with 4s dropped each but most dropped more than 10s and Corne dropped 48s with the lift that he found not seeming to sync with the times needed.

Mike and Gavin both did well in the later groups dropping 6.4s (996.3 pts) and 4.8s (998.7 pts) respectively.

Round 3 (L3, 3min max) Temperature increasing (30C+), light breeze and reasonably strong lift at times.

Mike was up first in Group 1. First flight followed a read and corrected based on some of the higher launchers. Made the 3m. Mike expected others to launch immediately into the air they had flown through on the way back, but apparently they were not so confident in this and everyone waited. When they did launch Mike went his own way following his own read to the S, the other pilots were in less good lift to the W but luckily for them, most made the time despite Mike's lift being significantly better. He hooked up nicely on the third flight as well and made the 1000pts.



Gavin employed some tactical waiting to observe other pilots and made the first flight, found great lift away from the pack on the second and had to work hard for the full time on the third but made the 1000pts too.

Corne fluffed his first launch and came back in for another, resulting in nearly 30s of time from the 1m "spare" being wasted. Following the pack after the relaunch, the lift seemed weaker lower down where he was and rather than risking a land out, he came back for a 2:26. He found lift which built nicely for a 3m on the second. The third flight required some great flying as he came back towards the box having fallen out of the lift he had found at the start of that flight. He was heading back to avoid a land out. As he was coming to the front edge of the treeline, he bubbled up a bit. Did a turn, and bit of tree surfing, more turns and gained height. Made the 3mins easily! Time dropped on the first flight meant it was 937 pts.

Round 4 (5 x 2m) Hot and calm. Lift seems light.

Group 1 passed with minor incident as Mike slipped and fell on his 5th launch. Some small fumbles on turn arounds meant 6.2s dropped for a score of 999 pts.

Group 4 however was full of incident!



"So much for the light lift.

We just had a massive thermal come through and it pulled two heavy gazebos [pictured] belonging to the Austrians off the ground next to our shelter. They nearly hit Gav and his gliders. It brushed past him. They then went about 20m and crushed two gliders that were next to the field. Luckily, no one was injured. "

Corne was flying during this drama and making an excellent job of it! On the fourth flight he was looking SE of the box. It wasn't going well. About a min in he and Mike noticed the windsock swing around and lift straight up! Corne started heading W towards it, but he was too low to go over the shelters to where Mike thought the thermal was. Then, as previously mentioned - flying gazebos!

While Mike was watching the carnage, Corne rode the rodeo thermal up in a NW direction, barely retaining control! Once near the back of the box, he put it in speed and wrestled his way out of the lift. As he came in to land, about 1.5m up and 4 secs from the 2min, someone came diving down and hit Corne's glider straight to the ground! He ran to it and the nose was creased just in front of the wing. Ran and changed models and made 1:06.3 for the rest of the time.



Due to the drama they called a reflight and there was much confusion. In the end, Corne and Anthony Rotteleur decided not to refly. Corne was satisfied with his 948 pts and I think was glad of a rest after the drama! Without the mid-air on landing we're pretty sure he would have won the group.

Gavin's group was less eventful but the first flight was tough. 8 or the 11 pilots dropped significant time on that one but after that he made four x 2m for 956 pts.

Round 5 (Best 3 of 6, 3m max)

Final round of the day was much less full of drama.

Only Gavin dropped time, 9.5s from one of his 3m flights.

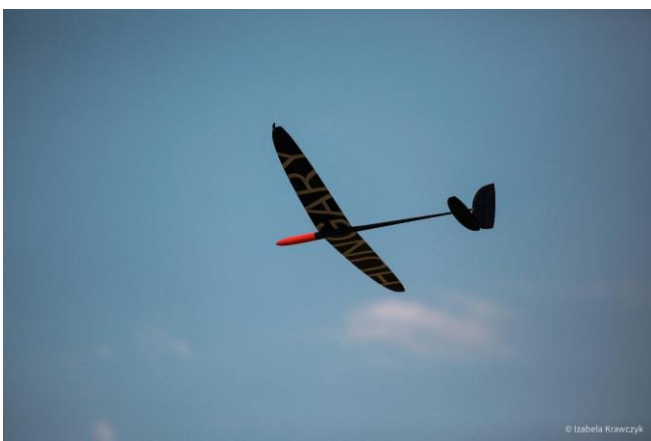
This brought to an end the first day and looking at the results sheet we had Corne in 51st, Gavin in 27th and Mike in a very impressive 5th place (on 99.94%).

Positions: Mike 5th, Gavin 27th, Corne 49th.

July 9th

Round 6 (Poker) Everyone's favorite task to start the second day! Hot and sunny. Some breeze, increasing.

We had discussed tactics for this task beforehand and while it is reasonable to



expect that some pilots at this level and in these conditions will always make the "All in" call (and make it!), the consensus within the team was that the "1, 7, 2" approach was a good balance of risk and reward. Unless there was a great read just before the start buzzer.

Mike executed this in Group 2, almost exactly as planned, flying a 1:20, 7:00 and a Window call at the end on 1:32.4. The longer flight was not easy with a planned run to a far downwind group which then changed to exploring what felt like good air closer to the box. Dropped in and out as the thermal shifted shape and direction ending up far downwind. The return for an on time landing wasn't certain but some swallows noted on the route back helped mark the better air and he landed on time which resulted in 989 pts.

In Group 1, Corne didn't have the read to make the second call for a long flight, so after a 1:30, called 3:00 and a 3:11.6 (W) for 770 pts.

Gavin was struck by a little paralysis by analysis at the start with a tempting All-in call which resulted in waiting a bit long. The first 2:30 call was all good and the aim was then 2 3min flights to follow. No good indications nearby at the right time meant we ended up with a 3:00 and a 1:27 for only 696 pts.

Round 7 (Big Ladder) Gavin was up first and managed to drop only about 11s. Corne's group had a bigger range of scores which usually means the air was harder to read. The 2:30 and 3:00 flights came up short for 820 pts.

Mike had a bit of a nightmare, landing out due to pushing too far on the 1:30 flight. His first significant error of the contest so was annoyed, but not disheartened.

Round 8 (All Up) Gavin first again. The first flight was most eventful. He found lift after

a while, seemed secure but was being thrown in and out a bit. He fell out to the front and had to decide to come back or push downwind to reconnect. Came forward to be safe, hit massive sink and ended up landing 3m short of the field having had to find a way around the tents. The other two flights were the full 3:00. Corne started with just over 2:30 and the second was underway when a halt was called due the fire fighting helicopter taking off. The reflight was much smoother with all three being the full 3:00. Sensible decisions and good flying. Most of the group hit massive lift on Mike's first flight and used the opportunity to scout upwind. The second was not easy, but managed the full time again. On the third flight most pilots scurried to add ballast based on the sustained pull from the previous thermal. Mike decided against the downwind run and pushed North. He didn't find anything significant. A lot of others were also struggling to find lift. Low now, he moved back towards the box but with a few turns going downwind in small bubbles. It was looking tough to get to the box and was turning into damage limitation as this was only at something like 1:20. However, everyone else was also struggling and those further downwind were struggling towards the box too. In the end 5 made it back with Mike landing a few seconds short of the winner for 985 pts.

Round 9 (Last 2 x 5mins) After what seemed like a day of re-flights for the juniors, we reached round 9.

In the earlier groups we watched big risks taken, some coming off, some not. The conditions were not conducive to big thermals.

Like everyone else in his group, Mike waited with no obvious signs. A high launcher went eventually, Mike followed and managed 2:15 with the person he followed getting 3:04. Should have removed ballast as the wind dropped just before the launch. More waiting for the second flight and then another attempt to follow someone with a higher launch. This didn't end well as he landed out by 5-10m Netting only 279 pts. Gavin went on the buzzer. Down wind, following the pull we felt in the box. Didn't hook up immediately but eventually climbed away and made the full 5mins. Second flight was tougher and shorter but that was the case for everyone and nobody made the 5mins. 2:36 for 952 pts.

Corne's first flight had no easily reachable reads to start with. Managed a 2:08 having watched the massive launchers head off miles downwind. He removed ballast for the second flight and went for lift above the box which was marked by birds. In and out of the sun for a bit which was quite low by now. Managed 4:34 for a total of 677 pts.



Positions: Mike 21st, Gavin 34th, Corne 42th.

July 10th

Wind from the East, pretty strong.

Round 10 (L5 (7m)) Gavin was flying with 75g ballast. A few attempts that didn't hook up and finally contacted something useful in SE corner and drifted back to make 3:04. Half the group made the full time so that was 613 pts.

Mike chose only 45g ballast, 295g total weight. Read to the W as the buzzer went. Air was there. Worked it back. Started to break up at the trees to the W. Seemed like every move made to correct made it worse. Started to return towards the big tree and caught a bubble for a few turns that in hindsight did not provide enough height for the movement downwind it forced. Tried to make the best of the rest of the journey to the box but landed out by 20m. Ran back, launched again and got around 2:03. 410 pts.

Ballast - "A big one", 75g we think, total 325g. Didn't launch immediately but then went for it in a space that didn't have other gliders. Further upwind of a group that were in the same S side channel. After a few minutes he was above and behind that group and looking good. As he started to come back he was highest of all with plenty of energy to spare and made sure of



returning safely to the box for the full 5:00 and 1000 pts.

Round 11 (1, 2, 3, 4) Gavin was in the first group. This was before the wind got up to crazy levels, ONLY 75g ballast weather.

Got the 4 first. Lift evaporated for the 2 (expecting the 3) and eked out 1:48. Next was 1 with no obvious read and for the final flight he headed to a group looking good and joined them. Confusion due to my directions meant I gave him a harder job to do. Turns out I was watching the wrong model. Luckily there was lift back towards us too so the 3 was secure. 978 pts.

The wind was getting up now. Between groups we had to reconfigure our tent to avoid it being blown away.

After another delay, Mike was up in what appears to be wind that is significantly over the limit for short periods. Anemometers out but no call to delay for wind speed.

Mike describes it as a disaster. 390g to start. Throwing at that weight in that wind was a new experience and after securing a 1:00 flight he tried to throw harder on the next flight which resulted in peg slipping and launched downwind. Tried to work something in that direction but landed out. He thought the launch peg may be broken so swapped to a 340g model. Another land out resulted and he finally ran back, headed S, got good air that would have been an easy 4:00 but the window ran out at 2:36. 428 pts.

Not a good round.

Corne opted for his biggest ballast (100g). The first flight was good. Cautious up wind. A few circles back to extend to 2... Hanging high at back of box extended to 3. Floating slowly forwards back to launch position for a 3:36.

Second flight was similar. Cautious going downwind but lift is there. Wind dropped a bit. Thought maybe 3, but came in just over 2. Third flight was into booming lift and went up to almost out of sight. The return was sensibly managed to give an easy 3 and the final flight was 31s. An excellent 928 pts.

After Group 5 was completed it was announced that pilots would be drawn for a reflight of Group 3 (Mike's group). He was overjoyed to hear his name called.

"I got a reprieve. I was randomly chosen for a 4 person reflight round. Flew my E model with 90g, so 340g auw.

Still super windy SW. It's right on the limit, gusting a lot over.

Launched to the W, there was a bit of air. Started coming back for what was likely a 1min, but surfed a bit on the way back and made 1:51. Went E for the 2nd, nothing found, 1:04. Went W for the 3rd, there was air, not very good, so headed back and made 2:13.

There was a glider way too far to the W to chase and another closer that didn't look too great. Felt a slight change in wind direction to the E, so launched that way. Launch was pretty good, so figured it was lift, so tried a turn and looked good. Worked it back up really high. Decided to come back and not risk it. Made it back reasonably ok, but lost so much height getting back. Was a good choice to head back. Made 3:02. Dropped 1:53. The guy who the reflight was for dropped a min, so a I scored 900." - Mike

Round 12 (Best Flight) Corne and Mike both made respectable times given the conditions (3:07 and 2:19 respectively) but the best times in each group meant only 362 and 385 pts.

With the wind as it is, if you're going down wind you need to be sure of your lift. Gavin's first attempt caught something that either disappeared or he fell out of but made a 3:35. Second was exploring and found nothing but sink. Other pilots were getting similar. Launching soon after the 5 min mark I felt Gavin was in good shape because, as far I could see, everybody else was doing similar. Connected better with lift in that one and landed a fraction before the buzzer for a 4:45. Turns out that was second place in the group for 931 pts.

Round 13 (L3 x 3m) An excellent round for Gavin. We had a read to the E on the first. Took a minute to find it but then boomed up high. Second flight was iffy in the same direction but turned a few times, and had a tricky time returning through sink. Once over the box there seemed to be some surfable lift at not much more than head height that allowed that to be extended to 2:57. Launched for the third flight after the 3 min call and didn't get any really useful lift at the front of the box Gavin then proceeded to hover over the front of the box, hardly losing height with me beside him staying quiet wondering if any of these S turns were going to turn into full circles as there seemed to be an opportunity to do so, but no, he carried on what looked like slope soaring with no slope and perfectly controlling speed and angle of attack to fly out the window for a 2:39. 1000



pts beating both a World champion and European champion in the process.

Mike struggled with the last flight and made 919 pts. Corne had a tough one and only made 682 pts.

"Bruising day for me today. Gav flew amazing. Corne started excellently, but tapered off. It was so windy. After the strong wind we had Romania, I made a 145g ballast. It got used today. Struggled to launch it at first. Slipped out of my fingers. Had to remember to hold on to it more strongly!"

"Whilst I didn't do well today, it was exciting flying. Except for my first round, the lift was big and it was really dynamic flying. The rounds I didn't screw up were really fun." - Mike

We had to pack up camp due to overnight storm warnings.

Positions: Gavin 26th, Corne 34th, Mike 35th.

July 11th

Storms overnight left us with wet ground and we were dripping with sweat after erecting the tent again. 25-29C and feeling very humid.

Wind was very light at the start and was forecast to be 5-10mph for the day



Round 14 (Best 3 x 3:20) Gavin flew first in Group 1. Some low battery alerts and a model swap that turned into a battery swap meant that quite a bit of time was dropped. 849 pts.

Mike had a Stork and some Swallow indicating lift for the first flight. Second flight tried a bit more to the N and Corne pointed to guys to S doing well, light but built well. Went back for the third and made it easily too. About 10s dropped on turn arounds including one that ballooned while catching for 989 pts.

Seems like the lift was there for all three of Corne's flights. Good turn arounds and only 5s dropped for 996 pts.

Round 15 (Big Ladder) Gavin - didn't make the 2:30. Others all good. 932 pts.

Mike felt his turn arounds were a bit tardy apparently but still made 992 pts.

Corne flew well with decent turn arounds. Came in a few seconds short on the final flight. 980 pts.

Round 16 (L2, 4m max) Mike was up first in Group 1. Things were going well, until...

His model went in and out of failsafe a few times. He was high but not a huge distance away and it did not seem to recover as he ran towards it. Reaching the ground the right side of the woods and fence in full failsafe. When he reached it, the model was moving all surfaces back and forward quickly at full deflection.

Others have reported problems in a similar location. Lots of time taken retrieving and swapping models meant he had less than 4m left and flew out the window for 3:50 and only 480 pts.

In Gavin's group, it seemed like the big launchers were all going to head far down wind on the first flight. It was going to be a difficult option and when they launched they seemed less sure of their intentions than their movement in the box had suggested. That 15s of indecision meant that far downwind was no longer an option and Gavin tried to push out W (upwind). Didn't find anything and tried 3 more short flights, none of which seemed to find the lift we thought was out to the S/SW. With approx 5:30 left in the window, a launch finally managed to get something positive and it seemed like we'd be able to split that window time into two flights which he did with a 3 and a 2:30. Unfortunately the ones that did go back did manage to make that first flight work. 687 pts.

Corne's group started with a confusing read that caught out the whole field who launched down wind and found nothing but sink to start with. One pilot even failed to make the box, running into the field as the time counted down. With two mins spare in the task this wasn't the end of the world.

Explored N in the second flight and found nothing then Gav, who was timing, noticed

birds close to the box and Corne found this lift and flew out 3:47.

Meanwhile everyone else had gone far down wind leaving no other indications. Corne went for it and going further and further finally contacted the lift, quite low, worked it like a pro up to a good height and comfortably flew the rest of the slot for 3:21. 892 pts.

Round 17 (5x 2m) All three pilots dropped some time here 30-35s. Group winners in each case dropped around 5s so scores were 960, 960 and 950 pts.

Gavin 30th, Corne 33rd, Mike 40th.

July 12th

Round 18 (Poker) Wind was still light, from the West.

Corne started with a 1:30, no brilliant air found. Soft air, gentle lift. Toying with a 3 next but went with 2, over flew a bit while looking for air and would have made a 3 in the end. Went Window for the final call but air was still light and hard to stay in it. Eventually got too low to make it work and missed that time. More than half the group scored less than 500 pts.

By the time Gavin's group was up, the air was looking better and indications were for lift to the S. Gavin chose a 1m to start and used that to scout N while letting the



others confirm the read to the S. The south air looked good enough and Gavin called Window. We then had nearly 9 minutes of in and out of stress as it wasn't always an easy ride in the lift he was in. A couple of redirects later and a little bit of sink on the way back to deal with before he managed to land with height to spare for a total of 9:54 and 992 pts.

Mike had the best indications (Storks) and it seemed like it would be easy. It was (relatively). 9:59. 1000 pts.

Round 19 (1 flight only, 9:59 max)

Corne should have listened to his timer (Mike) apparently! Holding on despite Mike pointing out where the lift was, he launched after nearly a minute and headed N as directed. He found the lift, boomed and was away for quite a stress free flight. 917 pts.

Gav was acting as helper for Mike. Streamers pulling to the S and slightly E, certainly seemed good enough to go for it on the buzzer. Worked slightly hard to get into it but joined a group and was away for 9:59 and 1000 pts.

Gavin paused a few seconds at the start, took a deep breath and went roughly

where we thought the lift was. Contacted it quickly and within a few minutes was top of that pile. There was another group closer we held in reserve but wasn't needed. The challenge became keeping the glider in sight and towards the end Gavin lost height a couple of times to take some of the pressure off his eyes. There were lower guys circling so this seemed to be without risk. 9:54 and 992 pts.

Round 20 (2 flights only, 5m)

Grp 1 Mike

Made both (give or take a few seconds). Found the air first and started turning. Made a few errors when high and far away, changed position a few times gained/lost height. He then found himself coming back from far away with his lightest model, luckily into only a light breeze. There was some helpful air on the way back and luckily made it into the box.

Corne held back a little to get a good read on what other pilots were doing then headed in their direction and found better air than most of them were in. The groups merged after a few minutes and Corne still



found the best bit for a very high ride back with no problems. In the second launch he headed directly for lift in the N and quickly gained height.

On both flights the lift was moving back much faster than it had been doing earlier in the day meaning there was more risk if not in it. 967 pts.

Gavin's first launch was towards a read to the SW. The pack seemed to go a bit further W and contacted light lift so Gav joined them. It was light and moving, hard to centre in and Gav was lower than the ones doing best. It was potentially a do or die to go further and hope for better or head back. Gav chose to come back and made 3:11. He waited for a while for the second launch to gain information and when he did launch he quickly connected with lift and a small group quickly formed

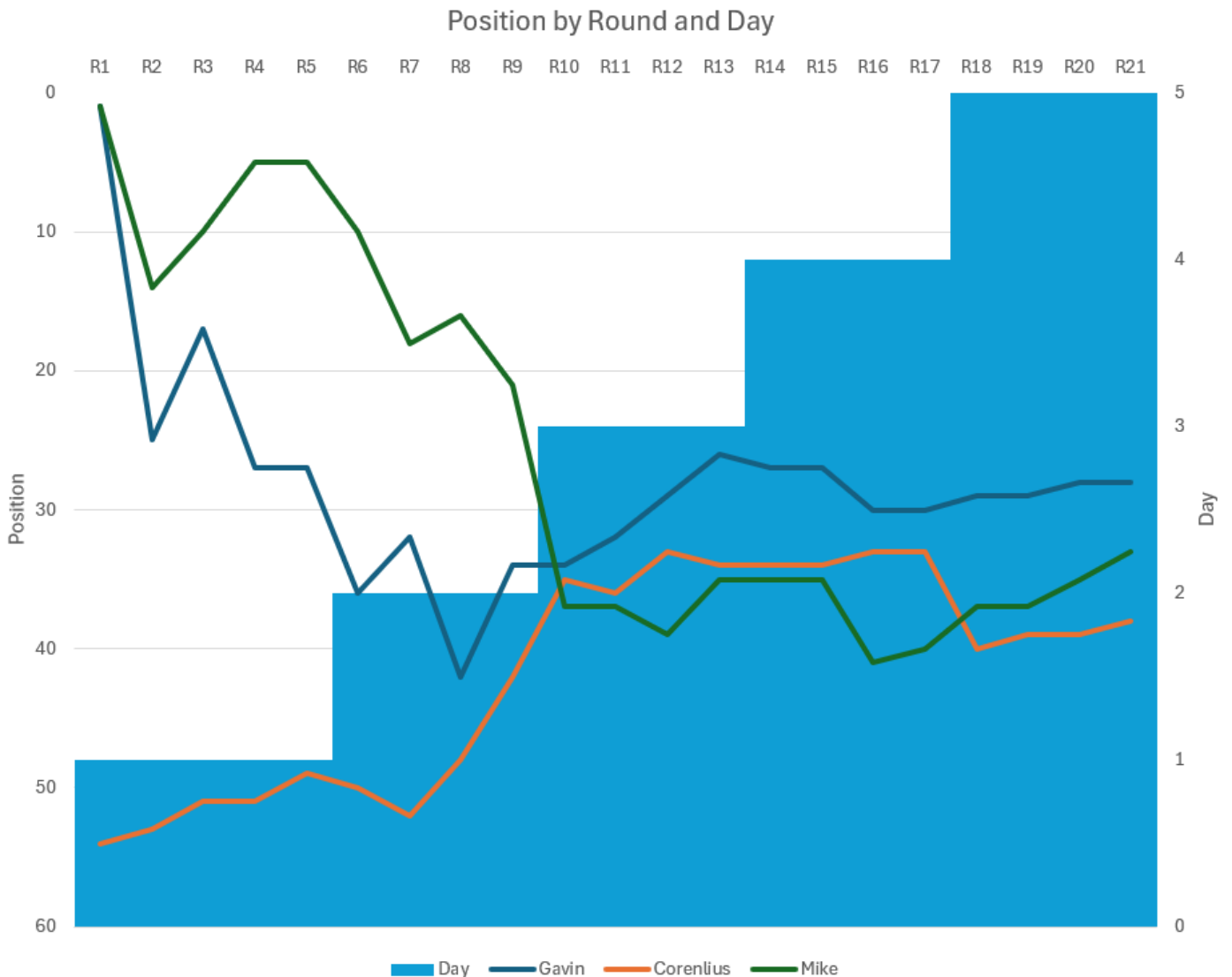
around him. It took a few minutes to get comfy but once settled down he was highest and flew the window for 4:46, 842 pts.

Round 21 (All Up) Last round of the preliminaries. Gavin made first and third nicely. The second was a struggle for many and Gavin made 2:21. 928 pts.

Mike flew it all beautifully. Made all 3. Only one other pilot managed that. Light lift, smooth flying. 100 pts.

Corenelius did well with a model that was a little too heavy for conditions. Again lots of smoothness required. Made 2:51, 2:33 and 2:45 for 908 pts.

At the end of 21 rounds positions were: Gavin 28th, Mike 33rd, Corne 38th.



July 13th

The Fly-Off

The day of the fly-off dawned with what was a more familiar looking grey sky for Team GBR. There was also a decent amount of wind which meant that conditions for the 10 pilots taking part would be not only challenging but very different from the previous week.

Round 1 saw a large separation of scores and the following rounds continued to differentiate the pilots. With 2nd place eventually scoring 95% and third only 72% you can see how difficult the 5 rounds were. Most of the fly-off tasks can be viewed in the video of the event available here:

[F3K - FAI European Championships 2024](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uo0YPILZSs>

Results

European Champion:

Henri Sander, Germany

2nd Place:

Vincent Merlijn, Netherlands

3rd Place:

Adas Siumbrys, Lithuania



#	Name	Ctry	Score	Pcnt	RawScore	Rnd1	Rnd2	Rnd3	Rnd4	Rnd5
						2 flights 5max	AllUp 3:00*5 1 flight 9:59max	Huge Ladder	Poker 3 in 15m	
1	SANDER, Henri	GER	4411.1	100.00	4411.1	784.6	1000.0	1000.0	1000.0	626.5
2	MERLIJN, Vincent	NED	4200.7	95.23	4200.7	756.2	858.2	929.8	656.5	1000.0
3	SIUMBRYNS, Adas	LTU	3207.6	72.72	3207.6	688.2	899.6	279.9	339.9	1000.0
4	COLLIN, Steeve	FRA	3048.5	69.11	3048.5	226.3	812.2	979.5	416.4	614.1
5	HUCALJUK, Arijan	CRO	2982.7	67.62	2982.7	1000.0	877.3	978.0	127.4	0.0
6	BRATRISOVSKY, Ivo	CZE	2975.2	67.45	2975.2	424.4	927.6	298.2	328.4	996.6
7	DUSS, Cederic	SUI	2884.3	65.39	2884.3	538.3	903.2	328.2	714.2	400.4
8	FLIXEDER, Bernhard	AUT	2312.9	52.43	2312.9	165.2	789.7	300.5	428.0	629.5
9	VERSCHOREN, Kristof	BEL	2066.6	46.85	2066.6	172.0	834.4	162.7	396.3	501.2
10	KOENIG, Paul	GER	1850.7	41.96	1850.7	321.8	775.1	333.6	211.4	208.8

Conclusion

Overall, Team GBR represented the country and the BMFA well. For me, as a first time TM, the experience of an international competition highlighted not only the skill of the pilots competing but also the difference in conditions that we experienced when compared to what we expect in the UK. As always, the international F3K community was welcoming, friendly and supportive.

Many thanks to the BMFA, SFTC and Superfly (Neil Harrison) for their support.

